Email Marketing

Slide 1: (Video starts to 27 seconds) Hi, my name is Patrice Valentine. I'm the president and owner of ProFusion Web Solutions. Today we're looking at inbox impact. How to win with email marketing. Whether you are just starting out and maybe your mom is the only email address on your email list currently, or if you already have an email list, but maybe you're just not sending to it as consistently as you would like. This presentation is going to give you some actionable takeaways to improve your next campaign or your first campaign, whatever camp you might be in.

Slide 2: What we will cover today (0:28 to 45 seconds) Today, we're going to take a look at cold email versus opt-in email, why opt-in email marketing still works, best practices for email marketing, some real world FAQs, and again throughout the whole thing, we're going to give you actionable takeaways that will improve your email marketing.

Slide 3: Cold email marketing (0:46 to 2:20). Let's first take a look at the two main types of email marketing. You're going to hear about cold emails and opt-in emails. Cold email marketing is just what it sounds like. You're reaching out to someone who hasn't heard from you before and probably hasn't given you permission to email them. Cold emails are often used by sales teams or agencies who are looking to generate new leads for the business. When cold email marketing is done right, it can really open up the doors to some great sales opportunities. I'm sure we've all seen these types of emails in our inbox. It might start off with, uh your name, and then it typically has some level of personalization. So, if you have just won an award recently, or maybe you've got a case study featured on your website or on your social media, the cold email might reference some of the things that you've currently been doing or how they've helped a business like yours grow in the past. And then they typically have a, you know, a call to action, a schedule an appointment with me, or let's schedule a time to talk, something like that. So, we've all seen those. And done right, again, they can open up a lot of great doors. A lot of big opportunities can happen with cold email when it's done correctly. Done poorly. However, it can end up in the spam folder or worse, it can damage your reputation. So, if the information that is being sent is not relevant or it's not the correct information. I'm sure you've seen emails where they put in someone's name, but that's not your name, and it immediately turns you off. So, those emails, if not done correctly, can really damage your reputation. This presentation that we're doing today is really going to talk more about opt-in email marketing.

Slide 4: Opt-in email marketing (2:21 to 3:08). Opt-in email marketing is permission-based. The people that you're sending to have given you permission, or they've subscribed

themselves to your email marketing. This could include newsletters, promotions, transactional emails, or even surveys, maybe even feedback type requests. That's the permission-based email that we're talking about. It really focuses on relationship building, customer engagement, and nurturing a potential customer from, you know, the the phase where they're just interested in trying to find out more about you all the way along that spectrum to where they're ready to buy now. So, it can be a nurturing type relationship. The recipients that are on list have raised their hand and said that they want to hear from you. This is absolute gold in the digital marketing world.

Slide 5: Build a quality email list (3:09 to 4:23). If your list is gold, how do you go about building a quality email list? First, you can add opt-in forms to your website. The opt-in form might be for some type of valuable lead magnet. This could be a checklist. It might be a how-to guide. It might be a coupon if that's relevant to your business. But those opt-in forms will send that information directly to your email marketing system, might be Mailchimp, might be Constant Contact, but it automatically starts building and creating that list of people who are saying, "I would like to hear more from you." You can also build your list via social media or by attending events and doing that old exchanging of business cards. Make sure you're adding those email addresses to your email marketing list as well. When you are building your email marketing list, make sure it's really clear what subscribers will be receiving. So, if you're building your list via an opt-in form, via a a download, for example, make sure that you're telling people that not only are you going to get this great checklist, we're also going to send you weekly helpful how-to guides or or weekly information about, you know, insert what your email newsletter is about here. So, make sure you're just setting the expectations so people know what they're going to be receiving from you.

Slide 6: Personalize and segment (4:24 to 5:52). These next few slides are going to talk specifically about now you're ready to send some email campaigns. And here are the best practices for when you're sending those campaigns. We're first going to talk about personalizing the emails and segmenting your list. So, let's talk about seg segmenting first. Segmenting might be, you know, separating out your list from existing customers and potential customers, or past customers. You might have customers that have left your business and are no longer doing business with you. And you'll likely talk to them in a different way than how you would talk to someone who is a prospect or someone who is already a customer. So, you want to make sure you have some way of segmenting your list. This could be something as simple as tagging them as current customer or past customer, or prospect. Just giving them a simple tag so you have a way of identifying who you're going to be sending to. So, you do want to segment your list and then personalizing the emails. Personalized emails deliver six times higher transaction rates than non-personalized. And a

personalization can be something as simple as adding their first name or adding their company name into the email itself. So when you're building your email, again, most modern email marketing systems like Mailchimp or Constant Contact, they're going to allow you to merge in whatever data you have. So if you have a birthday, if you have an anniversary, you have a first name, you're going to be able to merge in all of that data into the email. And again, you're going to want to do that because of that six time higher transaction rate.

Slide 7: Craft compelling subject lines (5:53 to 7:03). When you're actually creating your email marketing piece, one of the first things people are going to see is your subject line. That's the first thing that comes in on the inbox is who the email is being sent from and what the subject line is. For your subject line, you want to keep it short, sweet, and somewhat curiosity-driven. So, don't give away everything that's going to be in the email in the subject line. make it so that it either asks a question, teases the value that's in the in the email, or creates some level of urgency that that makes it so the person wants to open that email and actually see what's inside. You do want to avoid spammy words like free or act now, or even including a dollar amount in the subject line could trigger the spam filter and make it so that your email doesn't even get delivered to the right place. And then we always encourage AB testing the subject lines. Maybe for half your list, you ask a question in the subject line, and in half the list, you merge in their first name with a statement of some kind. But but test those subject lines and you can see which one gets a better open rate based on based on what subject line you put in there. That's the first thing people are going to see is your subject line. So you do want to make sure that it is compelling and encourages people to actually open the email.

Slide 8: Create engaging content (7:04 to 8:44). Now, when you're actually creating the body for your email, you want it to be obviously engaging. If your subject line is the headline that grabs attention, your body copy of the email is what needs to engage and educate within the email itself. You want to provide either tips or anecdotes, updates about a product. If it's a promotion, you want to do it's the old 80-20 rule, right? 80% of this should be educational and helpful and and provide great value to the customer and 20% could be sales if that's what your email list is signed up for. You should use a tone. I The slide says use a conversational tone, but the tone should be on brand for you. Our our brand is very conversational. We try and keep things so that it's not a bunch of industry jargon and techy type terms. We we try and be very conversational. So, my emails are in the same tone that everything else is with our business. Very conversational. If you are not that way with your business, your email marketing should be in the same tone that the rest of your marketing is. So, you want to make sure it's consistent. Email marketing should be skimable. Like we're going to the next slide, is is talking about mobile devices, but people are typically

reading their emails on their phones. And so you want to make sure that it's really easy to read and skimable with bullet points, headlines, short paragraphs. And then always, always you want to include one clear call to action. I have a whole slide talking about calls to action, so I'm not going to get too deep on it here, but make sure that every email you're sending does have that call to action. We'll also cover what to write about later on in the presentation, but just make sure that you are providing value with every email that you're sending.

Slide 9: Optimize for mobile devices (8:45 to 9:44). Like I said, emails should be optimized for mobile devices. 81% of people open emails on their phone. And actually, 30% of people, it's the first thing they do in the morning is open up their phone and check their email. If you're grabbing people with their blurry eyes right out of a deep sleep, you want to make sure that your email looks very good on their mobile device. That means you're going to want to have buttons that are large enough to be clickable. You want to make sure your text is legible. And you want to make sure that you test it on multiple devices so that you know you different mobile devices have, you know, they can put it on dark mode, for example, or it can be on light mode. You want to make sure that your email is coming across no matter what mode people have their phones on, and make sure that it comes across nice and easy and very readable. Again, 81% of people open their emails on their phones. So, if you're creating your your email for a desktop, you could be missing out. The usability might miss out a lot of those people who are checking it on their phones.

 Slide 10: Include a clear Call-To-Action (CTA) (8:45 to 11:17). Again, we said that every email should have a call to action and that just tells people what you want them to do next. It might be a shop or go to like a buy now button. It might be just learn more. Click here to, you know, learn more. Learn more is not my favorite, but oftentimes it is something that that is just super relevant. So, you know, if if you've put in partial blog post into your uh into your email and you want them to go read the full blog post, it might say learn more. So, I'm not totally opposed to that, but I like something with a little bit more action oriented on there. Something like download or schedule an appointment. Um, you want to tell the user what to do next. And again, use buttons with those action words so that they know what they're going to be doing. We want our customers to feel informed. We want them to know what the next step is. And using buttons with action words is going to help with that. You also want to make sure that your call to action stands out visually and isn't buried so far at the bottom that people might not get to it. You could even enter it in a couple of times in your email. So, make sure it stands out, whether it's a button or if it's a text link, that it's a different color, maybe, or is underlined so people know that it actually is the call to action. Your call to action might not be shople learn or schedule, but it it might be something that just continues the user along their their journey of going from prospect to customer. So,

whatever that might be for your business, you just want to make sure that they know that they're still continuing on this journey and that there is a next step. You just want to make sure you're telling them what that next step actually is.

Slide 11: Pay attention to email design (11:18 to 13:20). We touched on this a little bit, but you do want to pay attention to your email design. Again, uh things like Mailchimp and Constant Contact allow you to set themes. They allow you to set your brand colors and your font, and they allow you to upload logos, different versions of your logo. So, a dark version and a light version so that you can be really sure that it looks good no matter what uh what the person's, you know, device looks like. But you want to make sure that you are using that consistently. So, go ahead and take the time when you're setting up your email marketing, make sure you do set up those brand colors, the fonts, and the logo so that it's really consistent. The other thing that people don't do a lot that you see is is they don't fill out their company details completely on their email marketing system. So you you might see a blank address at the bottom of their email marketing feast. You might see, you know, some some content that is Laura Meibum or something that is autogenerated that you know is is just part of a template that they didn't clean up. So you want to pay attention to that email design to make sure that you are not leaving behind anything that was part of a a pre-built template. In email, you do also want to limit image sizes, right? So if if you're putting in a 2 megabyte image that I have to download on my phone, that's going to take time and likely is going to encourage me just to hit the delete button. So you want to make sure that images are optimized. If you're creating an attachment or or sending an attachment that that is an optimized file size so that you're not sending something that is large and unmanageable for people in their inbox. Include alt text on your images. That's just that little descriptor. So, when you add an image into your email marketing piece, make sure you're adding the alt tag that gives a description for what that image actually is. A lot of email users have it to where they don't automatically download the pictures. So, it will show the alt text. It'll show what that picture actually is in text before they go and download it. And that just gives them an idea of what they're actually going to be downloading. So, pay attention to that email design to make sure that it does look good. Make sure that it is representing your brand well.

Slide 12: Test and optimize (13:21 to 14:30). And then again, we've already touched on it a little bit, but just test and optimize. So, use those AB testing for the subject lines. Include one with a question mark or one with an emoji in the subject line and and and then one that doesn't have a question or one that doesn't include that emoji and just test that to see what is giving you higher open rates or higher click-through rates. You really only want to test one variable at a time. It can be really tempting to go in and change subject lines, change your call to action, and then change what time it sends from morning to night for half of your list.

But if you're doing more than one variable at a time, it's not going to give you a really clear picture as to what is working and what is not working. So only test one variable at a time and then analyze those results. So then go take a look and see, okay, which one performed better? Which one opened better? Was it the one with the question in the subject line? Was it the call to action that was a coupon versus a free download? So go ahead and take a look at the results and actually take a moment to to analyze those and see what is working better. Again, Mailchimp and Constant Contact are the two I keep coming back to. There are others, and most of those have those abilities built in.

Slide 13: Maintain email deliverability (14:31 to 16:31). This is the most techy I'm going to get on you today, but you do want to make sure that you are maintaining your good sender reputation. If I'm sending from my domain name from ProFusionwebsolutions.com, I want to make sure that I don't get that blacklisted. So, I want to make sure that I'm I'm able to continue sending from my domain name, which is why you want to use a reputable email platform like Mailchimp or Constant Contact. You might see you receive email marketing pieces from people who just simply put your email address in the BCC line of Outlook. There's not a way to do email marketing. You get zero analytics from that. You won't get any tracking data and it's a good way for your email domain to actually get blocked. So, if you're if you're sending the email directly from Outlook or from your email server, you want to probably change to something like a an email marketing platform like Mailchimp or Constant Contact. We did a whole presentation on your domain name and your DNS. So, there's a note here that says authenticate your domain name by adding SPF, DKIM, and DMARK. And if all of that is Greek to you, you're going to want to go back and look at our domain name servers presentation because it'll talk you through all of those things. In fact, we have a download on our website at ProFusionebsolutions.com that is available if you want to go see how you can even check whether or not you have these items on your domain name. You want to make sure that you clean your list regularly. So go in and remove if you know that someone has has left a business, go in and remove that person from your email database, or go in and update it from their old email address to their new email address. You want to keep your bounce rate low, so the amount of emails that bounce back as undeliverable. And you want to keep your unsubscribe rate low. So you want to make sure you're continually only sending to people who want to hear from you and who have opted in to hear from you.

Slide 14: Analyze and track results (16:32 to 18:01). If you are using an email marketing system, you will have access to the analytics on your campaigns. You'll be able to look and see who opened the campaign, who clicked on any of the links again, which emails bounced, and that could be a bounce from their their email inbox could be over the size limit, and so it may be bounced back. They could be on vacation, and so you got what's

called a soft bounce back, or the email address could just no longer exist. if they have, you know, moved companies or whatever, their email address might not exist anymore. And so, you would see that bounce and you would want to take care of those. You also want to take a look at the unsubscribe rates just to make sure that you're not getting it too high to where that that is a good indication of you're sending content that may not be valuable to your customers anymore. So, make sure you're just you're just keeping an eye on your unsubscribe rates. Take a look at what your best-performing emails are and try and figure out what pattern they have. Is it all educational pieces that people like? Do they like when you include stories about your dog? Um, you know, what what is it about those emails that's continually being the best performing? So, again, over time, you'll get this as you start to send more emails, and you'll be able to look and see if there are any patterns, and you can identify those and learn to to copy or mimic those as well. We like to say, Don't spray and pray. You want to optimize intentionally. So, don't just send out the same email to everyone and pray that it hits someone. You want to make sure that you're segmenting your list and that you're sending content that will resonate with the people that are on your list. So, analyze and track results.

Slide 15: Comply with email laws and regulations (18:02 to 20:02). I do want to just have a quick note on complying with email laws and regulations. If you're using, again, this sounds a little bit like an ad for Mailchimp or Constant Contact. It's not. Um, I'm just making sure that everyone is educated on these best practices here. If you're using Mailchimp, for example, you're likely going to be forced to include an unsubscribe link in every email unless it's a transactional email. So transactional emails actually don't need unsubscribe links. And a transactional email could be your order has shipped, your order is processed, or your credit card is declined, things like that. Those are transactional emails, and those actually don't need an unsubscribe link. But anything other than a transactional email needs to have an unsubscribe link in every single email. Again, Mailchimp, Constant Contact, they're going to force this on you. If you're using some other system that might not be as reputable, you just want to make sure that the unsubscribe link is included in every single email. You also need to have an unsubscribe policy. So, if someone does opt out, if they if they, you know, respond back to you, if they don't click the link that says unsubscribed and they just send you an email that says, "Hey, remove me from your list." You need to respect that opt-out and remove them from your list. Laws like CAN-SPAM, GDPR, and CASL all tell us what we need to do. They they tell us the laws on how we need to deal with our consumer data. Whether it needs to be something that they can remove on their own or whether it's something that we need to remove within a certain amount of time. You want to make sure you're following all of those laws because not following them can cause you massive fines. The fines are real, like tens of thousands of dollars per

violation. So, you want to make sure that you're following those laws. And again, using systems like Mailchimp and Constant Contact will help you. So that you're in compliance, but it is good for you to know at least the basics of those of those spam laws as well.

Slide 16: What should I write about? (20:03 to 21:48). So, we got through all of the kind of best practices, but now let's take a look on the marketing side of things on what should I even write about because I think people get in their own heads about this where they don't they don't think anyone wants to hear from them. We'll address that in the next slide, but that you know they they they don't know what to write about. So, here's just some some basic tips. And again, if you were on our blogging webinar a couple weeks ago as well, it this is a similar list because they're kind of similar topics. What what should I write about for my blog or what should I write about for my email marketing? does kind of go hand in hand. The obvious one is going to be that 20% where you're sending promotions, sales, and special offers to people who want to hear from you about your sales. You can send information on tips, how-to, FAQs. So, if you're getting a lot of FAQs that are coming in from your customers, that's an instant trigger to think, "Oh gosh, I'm getting this question a lot. I should write a blog post about it, or I should send an email marketing piece about it." If you have new staff, you can highlight the staff. You can talk about customer stories or case studies. Uh, behind the scenes, people love a good behind-the-scenes of a day in the life of here's what we do, here's how we do things, here's why we do them. any industry news or events related to your audience. That's always things that that could be, you know, very timely to send out in an email in an email piece. And then links to blog posts, videos, and social media content. Uh, we talk a lot about the things that we put on social media, and we know that some of our audience just isn't there. We post very regularly to Instagram with great content, and we know that some of our audience is not on Instagram. So what we do, we tend to do is is also piggyback on that content and turn it into an email marketing piece as well. So our our blog posts, our social media posts, all also turn into some type of email marketing content as well. So try and cross-promote and pull data from your other marketing sources as well.

Slide 17: I don't want to be a bother (21:49 to 23:14). I also hear this from business owners, where they don't want to bother people. They don't want to they, you know, people get too many emails already, so they don't want to send an email. But good emails, if you're sending valuable content, people aren't going to be bothered by the content that you're sending. 72% of consumers prefer email marketing over any other type of brand communication. That's even over text messages. So, they prefer to get email where it's on their computer or on their phone, and they can read it on their own time. Relevance is greater than frequency. So making sure that you're sending really relevant information that's going to resonate with your audience is better than sending them 10 emails in a in a

week, right? So if you send one a month, but it's really solid communication, that's way better than one per week. So make sure that your your content again remains really relevant. And again, well-timed emails builds trust, not annoyance. If I've started to engage with you, but I'm not yet in that buy now phase, but I I happen to hit my frustration point or I hit my breaking point, and then I happen to get an email from you. What a timely email that is. And I'm not going to be annoyed by that hitting my inbox. You've already given me some level of education. I'm going to be, you know, just it's just a reassurance. It's a reminder that you are a reliable, consistent communicator, and that will not be annoying. Again, if it's relevant, if it's valuable, people are not going to be annoyed. And if they are, they're going to unsubscribe. And that's not a bad thing. We'll talk about that as well.

Slide 18: We tried email marketing and it didn't work (23:15 to 24:47). We hear this from businesses, too, on we tried email marketing and it just didn't work. And and I hate to push back on this, but but the one thing I I typically will ask is, tell me how you were doing email marketing. Explain to me your process. And I don't want to say you were doing right or wrong, but there is a right way to do email marketing. One of it is, again, did you build your opt-in list? How did you get those emails? Were How were those email addresses acquired from you? Were you offering value, or were you just sending out, uh, sales flyers? We see that a lot where people are just sending out sales flyers, and they're not educating their audience or they're not talking about anything valuable. They're simply pitching a product, and that's not going to resonate well. Did you do any testing? And then lastly, did you send consistently? Because this is honestly the biggest issue we see is that people will build their list. They're starting they're starting to build it and then they'll send an email and they'll send an email and then they go dark for 6 months and then they remember oh shoot I was supposed to be doing email marketing but I got really busy and so then they start sending again but by then you have you know 20% of your emails they are no longer valid emails because email they people do change their email addresses. So if you're not staying up on that, then of course you're not going to see any results. Email marketing averages $36 return on investment for every $1 spent. And my caveat there is and always will be when done right. So if you are sending real value, if you're testing and analyzing the the information coming back to you, if you're sending consistently and you're sending relevant information, you will see results with email marketing.

Slide 19: Frequently asked questions (24:48 to 25:54). Let's jump into some some FAQ that we get. The first is, how often should I send emails? Um, it's my least favorite answer because I the answer is it depends. And I just said it in a previous slide. Your relevancy is going to be more important than your frequency of send. However, if you've told people that you're going to send your emails weekly, make sure you send your emails weekly. Uh, don't get to the point where you feel embarrassed to send out an email because it's been so long.

Weekly or every other week, bi-weekly is ideal for most companies, assuming they have something relevant to talk about. Again, consistency matters more than frequency. So, if you if you've said you're going to do it two weeks, be consistent about that. You can always let your subscribers choose their frequency preferences. So, if you have, you know, if you're sending one per week or two per week, for example, you can always let your subscriber choose to only receive one communication per month, then that might be a rollup of all the emails. That might be a digest of the emails, and they can pick and choose which one they want to read through. So, you can let your subscribers choose their frequency preferences, but I would start with bi-weekly if that feels like a good thing that you can consistently do.

Slide 20: Frequently asked questions (25:55 to 28:07). Start off with bi-weekly. People are always wanting to compare, right? So, the question we get is, "What's a good open rate?" You want to see if your open rates are as good as, uh, you know, someone else's or your competitors. Industry average is 17 to 28%. But, it's really going to be dependent on what you're sending. Transactional emails have a way higher open rate, upwards of 70 to 80%. For the transactional type emails, again, order processing, or if your card is declined. Any type of those transactional type emails tend to be really high open rates, it's going to be a lot lower for um a cold email, for example. So, uh, it really is depending on on your industry and the type of email that you're sending, but the industry average is between 17 and 28% is going to be your open rate. Don't obsess on open rates. Focus on improving your content. So if one of your emails didn't do as well, make make a note of that, but don't obsess and don't stop sending because of it. We hear people say social media is more effective now than email marketing. Social is great. We love social. We do it, too. We participate in social media, but we think that they're more complimentary than they are choosing one over the other. Social is more broad. You're speaking to a larger audience with social media. Your email is more personal and reliably delivered. The beautiful the most beautiful thing about email is that you own that email list. If Instagram went away tomorrow, if Facebook went away tomorrow, or if all of a sudden they were going to make you pay in order to have access to your audience that you've built. So, you're kind of at the whim of the social media platforms, where if you have your email list, you own that. You could go and market to them anytime you wanted to because that email list is something you've procured. You're not relying on on meta in order to access that. Again, Mailchimp and Constant Contact, you can export your list. So, if you said to me, "Yeah, well, it's in Mailchimp," you can easily export that list and then you have an Excel spreadsheet full of all of the customers and you can take it and do it do with it what you want. You do not have that ability in Facebook or Instagram. You cannot export a list of email addresses for the users that say that they like you or follow you on the social platforms.

Slide 21: Frequently asked questions (28:08 to 29:33). I think a lot of people are afraid of rejection and they look at this and say, "Well, I don't want to send it out cuz what if somebody unsubscribes?" That's great. If someone unsubscribes, they're telling you they're not interested. It it's it's not a um it's not a comment on you. It's not that they don't like you. They're simply not interested in what you're offering at this moment. They can always resubscribe, but having people unsubscribe keeps your list engaged and will improve deliverability, right? So, it's okay if people unsubscribe. If you are very sensitive about this, just don't get notified. You can turn off the notifications in Mailchimp and Constant Contact to say that you do not want to be notified when someone unsubscribes. You can always go in and look, but you can turn off that notice saying that, you know, Janet Smith has unsubscribed. You can turn that right off. You don't even need to be bothered with that. So, if this is a big sticking point for you, turn off the notifications and continue sending because you have more people on your list who want to hear from you than people who are saying, "Please don't email me anymore." The last question is, do I really need to segment my list? And the answer is yes. Segmented campaigns get two to three times better engagement than non-segmented. Even simple segments of new versus returning customers can boost your results. So, the most simple segments you can do, just tag your list, where you met them, what they're interested in, whatever information you have on your subscribers, segment it so you can send specific and relevant information to those folks.

Slide 22: Contact Us (29:34 to 30:48). I know we just covered a ton of information. It's a little bit like drinking water from a fire hose, and I completely understand that. Email marketing is incredibly powerful when done correctly. If you have not yet implemented email marketing into your business, consider this your kick in the rear end to go ahead and get that started. If you're not on our email list, here's how we're building ours. Go to ProFusionwebsolutions.com/newsletter, and you can sign up directly right there. We send out weekly tips, weekly helpful information, recaps on our webinars, sometimes funny industry things, and there are a lot of things happening in our industry with AI specifically and search engine optimization, and making sure that your site can be found. So, if you do want to get on our newsletter, you can go right there on that top line and sign up. But if you have questions about email marketing, if you're not sure how to get started, if you're not sure about, you know, some of the best practices that I talked about, just reach out. You can send us an email. email addresses on the on the screen there or you can give us a call at the phone number on the screen. Again, we do post very regularly and frequently on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. We'd love if you give us a like or a follow. And if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach